

Daily Assignment

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Sunday, December 4, 2011

Daily Assignment #96: December Holidays

It's that time of year... holidays. It is also a very busy time of year, not only because of the holidays but they lead into the winter school break.

Here is a list of some of the holidays for December:

- December 1st Rosa Park's Day
- 7th Pearl Harbor Day
- 13th St. Lucia Day, Sweden
- 20th- 28th Chanukah, Jewish
- 21st First Day of Winter
- 22nd Winter Solstice
- 25th Christmas. Christians, Roman Catholics, International
- 26th Boxing Day, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom
- 26th- January 1st Kwanzaa, African Americans
- 28th National Chocolate Day, Everyone I know
- 31st New Year's Eve

Please refer to **Daily Assignment #27** for ideas on how to handle the holidays. Keep in mind, if you are planning to teach certain holidays make sure you have a balance of customs from each one. Don't just teach one holiday.

This is also a time to bring closure to a semester and to units of study. Knowing that this is a chaotic time, begin planning how you would like the last few days to look and feel like. Some teachers plan class parties, a class breakfast with student exhibits/presentations, a special field trip, e.g. concert, play, movie. Then there are other teachers that press on with learning and try to keep a low key tone because the students are already worked into a tizzy. Having said all that, I recognize that some schools/districts have policies in regard to what should occur on those last few days.

Because this month is such a busy time my next blog will be posted on Sunday, January 8, 2012.

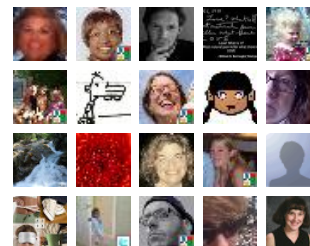
Have a wonderful, joyful, holiday, whatever it may be and see you in January.



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Also, check out my book on effective strategies:

<http://www.bookemon.com/book-profile/daily-assignment/126409>

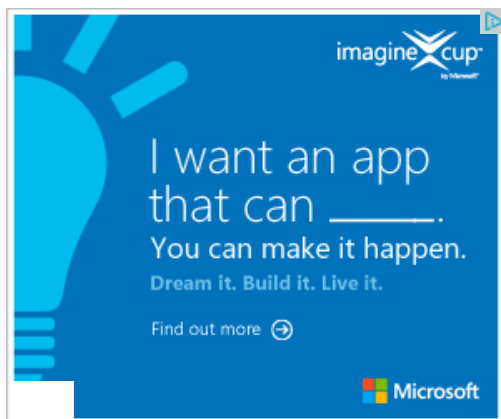
It will make a great gift for that very special educator in your life.

Best Effort,

Linda Fobes

Posted by **linda103** at 7:38 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, November 30, 2011

Daily Assignment #95: Body Language of Teachers

Our body language and expressions convey to students about how we think or feel about what they are saying or doing. Body language/nonverbal communication includes: facial expressions, eye contact, body movement, spatial distance, posture. Sometimes we are not even aware of our body language and the messages we are sending to students. Through facial expressions a teacher can communicate enthusiasm, warmth, assertiveness, confidence, expectations, feelings or displeasure. Just the slight movement of an eyebrow sends a message to the students. Using eye contact, or not, when a student is speaking sends another message. It can mean I'm either interested in what you have to say or I'm not interested. Direct eye contact can also communicate disapproval. I mastered "The Look" and used it a lot for classroom management. As one student described it, "Linda does a scary look." No words are necessary.

Teachers communicate through how they stand and where, also in where they sit, e.g. on a desk, chair or stool, in walking around the room, use of arms, e.g. folding arms, throwing them up in the air (lol), pointing, leaning toward or away from students, hands on hips, etc...

When a student is speaking, leaning head or body forward sends the message that you are listening and interested. When smiling frequently the message communicated is one of friendliness. Maintaining eye contact sends the message that you are interested. Crossed arms communicate an unwillingness to engage or defensiveness, while uncrossed arms communicates openness. Becoming fidgety

▼ **December** (1)

Daily Assignment #96:
December Holidays

► **November** (7)

► **October** (9)

► **September** (5)

► **August** (4)

► **June** (6)

► **May** (9)

► **April** (5)

► **March** (6)

► **February** (5)

► **January** (9)

► **2010** (31)

About Me

linda103

Educator for 34 years. Classroom teacher- grades 1,2,3,5,6.

Educational consultant for 18 years teaching a graduate level course on effective teaching strategies.

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indicates a loss of interest. So, leave that stack of papers alone when a student is talking. Whatever you do, don't clench your fists. That message is very clear and scary. Frowning shows disapproval and that's okay, but not all day or you'll get frown lines.

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/SLIP/TIPS/Teaching.html>

Teachers can use all of these behaviors as nonverbal behavioral management strategies.

Bottom line, teachers need to become much more aware of their body language so that we promote learning and not shut down student learning.

Consider having a peer observe and note your body language in 30-45 minute block of time. In that way, you will be able to recognize the behaviors that you may need to foster or completely eliminate.

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower". Also, take a moment to check out my

book:<http://www.bookemon.com/book-profile/daily-assignment/126409>

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 7:19 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, November 20, 2011

Daily Assignment #94: LAFF don't CRY

While researching Active Listening, I came across this great strategy, which includes Active Listening, for facilitating parent-conferences, especially difficult ones. The acronym LAFF don't CRY, (McNaughty, Hamlin, McCarthy, Head-Reaves & Schreiner, 2008), stands for:

L Listen/empathize

A Ask questions

F Focus on the issue

F Find a 1st step

DON'T

C Critize people who aren't present

R React hastily and promise something you can't deliver

Y Yakety-yak-yak off subject, e.g. talk about oneself

After reading about this strategy, I realized how many other scenerios this could be used in, e.g. staff meetings, family gatherings.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends.

If you haven't already, check out my book: 70 Effective Teaching Strategies At A Glance

"<http://www.bookemon.com/book-profile/daily-assignment>"

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday my next blog will be on Wednesday, November 30th.

Have a wonderful and safe holiday and don't forget to practice Active Listening.

Most importantly, LAFF don't CRY.

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 7:13 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, November 16, 2011

Daily Assignment #93: Listening Skills

In Daily Assignment #92 I wrote about "Teacher Talk". In this blog, I am focusing on the listener, the students. Research has shown that we remember 25-50% of what we hear. That means if you are doing direct instruction for 10 minutes, students pay attention to less than half of your instruction. This also applies to when teachers are giving directions. Doesn't this explain a lot? Bottomline, teachers need to make sure that they say the important stuff up front and talk less, they're not listening anyway.

We need to teach students to be better listeners. The research, that I have read on this topic, indicates that the most important strategy for teaching students listening skills, is modeling by the teacher. In the book, *In the Company of Others: An Introduction to Communication*, Dan Rothwell has identified 5 key elements for active listening.

1. Pay attention

- Give the speaker your undivided attention and acknowledge the message
- Recognize that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly.
- Look at the speaker directly
- Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal.
- Avoid being distracted by environmental factors.
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
- Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.

2. Show that you are listening

- Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.
- Nod occasionally.
- Smile and use other facial expressions.
- Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
- Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and uh huh.

3. Provide feedback

- Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.
- Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is...", and "Sounds like you are saying..."

- Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say..." "Is this what you mean?"
- Summarize the speaker's comments periodically.

4. **Defer judgment**

- Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.
- Allow the speaker to finish.
- Don't interrupt with counter arguments.

5. **Respond appropriately**

- Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting them down.
- Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
- Assert your opinions respectfully.
- Treat the other person as you would want to be treated.

For older students, middle-high school age, I recommend putting these key elements on a chart, explaining the importance of them, in a few words, and, not only modeling them, but refer to them as often as possible throughout the school year.

You will find that these skills are not only useful between teacher-student interactions, but teacher-parents and colleague-colleague, as well as staff meetings, and personal relationships.

With the holidays coming up, you will have many opportunities to practice these skills with family members. So, when you're sitting next to Uncle Harry or Aunt Edith, and listening to the same story you have listened to since your conception, take this opportunity to do active listening. (No alcohol should be consumed during this experiment.) As you will discover, active listening takes a lot of effort. Hopefully, this experiment will help you to have empathy for your students as they struggle with developing this new skill.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower". Also, take a look at my book: <http://www.bookemon.com/book-profile/daily-assignment>
Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 3:43 PM No comments:



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Sunday, November 13, 2011

Daily Assignment #92: Teacher Talk

Research shows that teachers talk 70-80% of the time during a typical lesson and students speak for 20-30% of the time. No wonder we are exhausted. It should be the other way around with teachers speaking 20-30% of the time.

However, we all know that there are lessons which require more direct instruction/ teacher talk. Keep in mind the average learner's attention span is 10-18 minutes. If you are teaching a 45 minute class, and you are talking from

the beginning, just know your students have shut you off after the first 10-15 minutes. So, plan well.

We need to be more cognizant of how much talking we do and try to restrict our talking to vital moments during instruction. If the teacher only talks during vital moments the students are more likely to listen because they know that when the teacher talks it must be important. Also, teachers need to be aware of the language and vocabulary they use, therefore modeling for students.

Our students need to talk more in class, of course on topic. In this way, students have more opportunities to use language and vocabulary related to the topic and demonstrate their skills. The teacher will also have another form of assessment.

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends.

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Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by linda103 at 6:29 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Daily Assignment #91: 7 Steps for Effective Instruction

Researchers have found that to make instruction more effective:

1. Begin a lesson stating the objectives.
2. Do a quick review of previous learning.
3. Present new material in small steps, have students practice after each step.
4. Give clear and detailed instruction and explanations.
5. Provide a lot of practice.
6. Check for understanding.
7. Provide feedback and corrections.

This does take time, but you will notice an increase in students' understanding. So, it is worth the effort.

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Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 7:01 PM 1 comment: 

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Sunday, November 6, 2011

Daily Assignment #90: Just a Few Facts on Thanksgiving

<http://youtu.be/VHcpkNYvc1s>

A link for information on the Wampanoag's perspective:

<http://www.2020tech.com/thanks/temp.html>

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends.

If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 8:19 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, November 2, 2011

Daily Assignment #89: Adjusting Speech

Teachers adjust their speech patterns all the time for lots of reasons. For more details watch this

video.

<http://youtu.be/jQqVwBH2oY4>

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends.

If you haven't already, take a look at my book:

<http://www.bookemon.com/book-profile/daily-assignment/126409>

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 5:04 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, October 30, 2011

Daily Assignment #88: Modeling Thinking Aloud

Modeling Thinking Aloud is a strategy a teacher would use to demonstrate effective strategies students might use when solving math problems, reading a difficult text, decoding a word, solving an analogy, what is needed for graduation, how to take a multiple choice test, or any other task. The teacher verbalizes his/her thinking as they work through a problem.

For example: suppose during math class you'd like students to estimate the number of pencils in a school. Introduce the strategy by saying, "The strategy I am going to use today is estimation. We use it to . . . It is useful because . . . When we estimate, we . . ."

Next say, "I am going to think aloud as I estimate the number of pencils in our school. I want you to listen and jot down my ideas and actions." Then, think aloud as you perform the task.

Your think-aloud might go something like this:

"Hmmmmm. So, let me start by estimating the number of students in the building. Let's see. There are 5 grades; first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade, plus kindergarten. So, that makes 6 grades because 5 plus 1 equals 6. And there are 2

classes at each grade level, right? So, that makes 12 classes in all because 6 times 2 is 12. Okay, now I have to figure out how many students in all. Well, how many in this class? [Counts.] Fifteen, right? Okay, I'm going to assume that 15 is average. So, if there are 12 classes with 15 students in each class, that makes, let's see, if it were 10 classes it would be 150 because 10 times 15 is 150. Then 2 more classes would be 2 times 15, and 2 times 15 is 30, so I add 30 to 150 and get 180. So, there are about 180 students in the school. I also have to add 12 to 180 because the school has 12 teachers, and teachers use pencils, too. So that is 192 people with pencils."

Continue in this way.

When reading aloud, you can stop from time to time and orally complete sentences like these:

- So far, I've learned...
- This made me think of...
- That didn't make sense.
- I think ____ will happen next.
- I reread that part because...
- I was confused by...
- I think the most important part was...
- That is interesting because...
- I wonder why...
- I just thought of...

(Teacher Vision:<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/skill-builder/problem-solving/48546.html?page=1>)

At the end of the Think Aloud, process what you did with the students. Ask, "What were the strategies I used?", "What did they sound like?", "What did they look like?" As the students respond chart the strategies.

When it is time for the students to do the task on their own refer to the strategies on the chart. Encourage the students to verbalize their thinking as they do the steps in the task.

I recommend writing a script for yourself. In this way you will remember to include all the strategies you want the students to use. Within the script include false starts and confusions, it will be more like what the students might do when they are on their own.

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Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 6:31 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Daily Assignment #87: Pre-Alert

Pre -Alert is an effective Attention Move. There are many ways you can use this strategy.

<http://youtu.be/3h1mu3JpNGI>

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Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 6:11 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, October 23, 2011

Daily Assignment #86: Inside-Outside Circle

Inside-Outside Circle is a summarizing strategy developed by Spencer Kagan. This is a great strategy to get students to interact with each other and to get them up and moving. It is especially helpful for ESL students who need to practice oral language.

Procedure:

1. Half of the students stand up and form an inner circle, facing out. They are Partner A.
2. The other half of the class forms an outer circle, facing a partner from the inside circle. They are Partner B.
3. Put a question or a statement on a board, or have students summarize a text, etc...
4. Give the students "Think Time," about 10-15 seconds.
5. Partner A shares their response for 1 minute.
6. Partner B shares their response for 1 minute.
7. Ring a bell, chime or just say "Switch".
8. The outside circles slides 2 people to the left, clockwise.

9. Repeat #5,6,7, 8 alternating which Partner responds first.

The teacher needs to decide how many times the circle moves and how long the responses should be. Some teachers shorten the response time each time the circle moves.

This is also a good strategy for the teacher to do an assessment of student learning. The teacher stands in the middle of the inner circle and listens to the conversations.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 6:15 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Daily Assignment #85: Homework Buddies

By now you probably know your students fairly well. This is a good time to pair students up as Homework Buddies. Explain to the students that they may exchange phone numbers and call each other in the evening if they are experiencing difficulty with a homework assignment. You can also use these partners to share homework assignments between them so they only have to do half the homework on occasion. Homework Buddies can also be used to check each others' answers the next day. This is a much more interesting way to go over homework and it engages the students in the process.

Make sure you are clear about the usage of Homework Buddies for your class. If in setting the system up you do not provide clarity on the difference between copying and helping you will end up with a mess.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends.
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Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 8:33 PM 2 comments: 

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Sunday, October 16, 2011

Daily Assignment #84: Questions-Part 2: Designing Thinking Level Questions

Questions can "enhance student learning by developing critical thinking skills, reinforce student understanding, correct student misunderstanding, provide feedback for students, and enliven class discussions" (Caram and Davis 2005, *Inviting Student Engagement with Questioning*. Kappa Delta Pi Record.)

Bloom identified and defined 6 question categories:

- **Knowledge:** remember, memorize, recognize, repeat, list. These are the who, what, when, where, how questions. Examples: Who were? What is a ...? When did the...? How did ...? Label...
- **Organizing:** compare/contrast, transferring, classify, organization and selection of facts and ideas. Examples: Compare the ... Contrast the ... Classify the...
- **Application:** problem solving, applying information, use of facts, rules and principles, show, solve. Examples: How is ... an example of ...? How is ... related to ...? Why is ... significant?
- **Analysis:** subdividing, sort, categorize. Examples: What are the parts or features of ...? Classify ... according to ... Outline/diagram ... How does ... Compare/contrast with ...? What evidence can you list for ...?
- **Synthesis:** create, design, develop, synthesize, hypothesize, devise. Example: What would you predict/infer from ...? What ideas can you add to ...? How would you create/design a new ...? What might happen if you combined ...? What solutions would you suggest for ...?
- **Evaluation:** evaluate, development of opinions, judgements or decisions. Do you agree that ...? What do you think about ...? What is the most important ...? Place the following in order of priority...? How would you decide about ...? What criteria would you use to assess ...?

When planning a unit of study make sure to include higher level thinking questions, which you have designed from Bloom's 6 categories.

If you want to check the category the questions you are asking fall into, ask a colleague to observe you and write down all the questions you ask. Then sort them into management and content related. Sort the content related questions into Bloom's 6 categories.

Caram and Davis say that teachers have a tendency to "ask questions in the Knowledge category 80% to 90% of the time. These questions are not bad, but using them all the time is." Teachers need to incorporate higher order level questions into their instruction, which will require deeper thinking and more in depth responses.

"There are these four ways of answering questions. Which four? There are questions that should be answered categorically [straightforwardly yes, no, this, that]. There are questions that should be answered with an analytical (qualified) answer [defining or redefining the terms]. There are questions that should be answered with a counter-question. There are questions that should be put aside. These are the four ways of answering questions." —Buddha, Source

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by linda103 at 6:21 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Daily Assignment #83: Questions-Why do we ask the questions we do?

We pose questions to students for many reasons. Some reasons might be:

- to determine what students know and don't know
- to develop critical and creative thinking skills
- to provide a review of material and content
- to prepare students for what is to be learned
- to engage students in discussion
- to teach students to ask questions

Sometimes we ask questions as an attention move, e.g. "Are you paying attention?", "Tim, are you with me on this?", "Maria, what are you doing?" Some questions are to check for understanding /comprehension during a lesson. A teacher might ask a question which requires a student to recall specific information. These are the "who, what, when, where, how questions, e.g. "Who are the main characters in To Kill A Mockingbird?", "What is the name of the Shakespeare play about the Prince of Denmark?", "What are the names of the 5 food groups?", "When did the Cuban Missile Crisis happen?"

Here is a list of some other types of questions:

- *Rhetorical*: used for its persuasive effect without the expectation of a reply. EX: "Is the Pope Catholic?", "How much longer must women suffer this injustice?"
- *Clarification*: "Why do you say that?", "How does this relate to our conversation?"
- *Probing*: "What could we assume instead?", "What would be an example?", "What generalizations can you make?"
- *Perspectives/Viewpoints/Open Ended*: "What is another way to look at this?", "Please explain why it might be beneficial?", "What might be the strengths and weaknesses of...?"
- *Closed*: these questions require a yes or no answer. EX: "Is Athens the capital of Greece?", "Does the moon rotate around the earth?", "Did the Germans invade Norway?"
- *Hypothetical*: "What would you do if...?"
- *Reflective*: "What might you do differently next time?", "What could you have done differently?"
- *Leading*: used to gain acceptance of your view, "You agree with me, don't you?"
- *Inference*: "What might be the reasons Ophelia went mad in Hamlet?"

This list is certainly not complete. There are lots of other types of questions but this will help you to begin your thinking about why you ask the questions you ask.

My next blog will take questioning to the next level by showing how to phrase/design higher level thinking questions using Bloom's Taxonomy.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider

becoming a "Follower".
Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by linda103 at 5:34 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Monday, October 10, 2011

Daily Assignment #82: Carousel Brainstorming

Carousel brainstorming can be done as an activator or a summarizer. This strategy lets the teacher know what students know about a topic.

Put students in groups of 3-4. Each group has a sheet of chart paper and a particular color of a marker. On each chart paper the teacher has written a subtopic related to the main topic of study. One student serves as the recorder.

Give the students 30-45 seconds (set a timer) to write down on the chart paper all the terms they can think of that they associate with their subtopic.

At the end of the 30-45 seconds, the students pass their charts, keeping their assigned colored marker, clockwise to the next group. Do this until all groups have had a chance to work on all the list and the sheets have made it around to the original groups. Each time add about 10-15 more seconds to the allotted time, because it will be more challenging for students to add new information to the brainstorming list.

When the activity is completed, post the charts around the room to use for future reference. Ask the students what they noticed or what did they learn from the brainstorming?

Examples:

Topic: Circulatory System

- Heart
- Lungs

- Arteries
- Veins
- Capillaries
- Gases

Topic: Database

- What is database used for?
- What do you see when viewing a database?
- What are examples of databases that we use in everyday life?
- What fields of information would you place in a database of your friends?
- What types of information do not necessarily belong in a database?

Topic: U.S. Government

- legislative
- executive
- judicial
- checks and balances

Topic: Systems of the body

- muscular
- skeletal
- digestive
- lymphatic
- nervous
- endocrine
- cardiovascular

Topic: Animals

- mammals
- amphibians
- reptiles
- birds
- insects
- fish

Topic: Parts of speech

- nouns
- verbs
- adjectives
- adverbs
- prepositions
- pronouns
- conjunctions
- interjections

I hope you will experiment with this strategy. It helps students to know that they do know something about a topic that is about to be studied or it helps students to review a topic they have just completed studying.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 7:22 AM No comments: 

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Wednesday, October 5, 2011

Daily Assignment #81: Put Downs/Push Ups

Posted by [linda103](#) at 8:02 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, October 2, 2011

Daily Assignment #80: Out of Pocket Expenses

<http://youtu.be/XTDrtwo9M-Y>

Posted by [linda103](#) at 5:40 PM No comments: 

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Daily Assignment #79: Using Music in the Classroom

Using classical music in the classroom has many benefits for students. There is a phenomenon called the "Mozart Effect" where college students had "enhanced spatial task performance" after listening to Mozart's music. On the other side, there are studies that say listening to Mozart makes not difference in student performance. For me, I found using music in the classroom helped to motivate students to complete their work. I also used music during transitions, clean-up and any other times as it felt appropriate. Using music in the classroom can make learning more enjoyable.

If you decide to use music in your classroom classical music is best. Now having said that, you need to consider the age group of your students and match the music. Whatever the music is that you select it should be an instrumental, otherwise the students will focus on the lyrics, and it should not be any faster than a heartbeat. If you play fast music you will find that the students become hyped up, instead of calmer. Also, you will find that the students will need a variety of instrumental music to keep them engaged. Playing music from different genres is a great way for students to learn about various types of music, not to mention, culture and history.

My class had a theme song it was Kermit the Frog's song "Rainbow Connection," as sung by Sarah McLachlan. I also taught with a middle school math teacher who played "Hit the Road Jack", by Ray Charles, at the end of every class. In fact, the 8th graders sang this song to him, in honor of his retirement, at their graduation ceremony. It was fantastic!

Suggested music:

Music for visualization and imagery: Beethoven Symphony No. 6 (Pastorale)

Debussy	The Sea; Nocturnes
Listz	Hungarian Rhapsodies
Mozart	Piano Concerto No. 21
Tchaikovsky	Romeo and Juliet Overture
Vivaldi	The Four Seasons

Music for focusing: J.S. Bach Brandenburg Concertos; The Well-

	Tempered Clavier
Brahms	Violin Concertos
Handel	Water Music
Telemann	Concerto for 3 Violins and

Orchestra

Music for calming:	Bruch	Scottish Fantasy
	Copland	Quiet City; Appalachian Spring
	Debussy	Clair de lune
	Kreisler	Humoresque
	Lee	Parkening Plays Bach
	Wagner	Evening Star

Music to relieve tension:	J.S. Bach	Air on a G String
	Debussy	Images
	Faure	Piano music
	Giuliani	Guitar Concertos
	Pachelbel	Canon in D

Music for celebration:	Beethoven	Chorale Fantasy for Piano, Chorus &
		Orchestra
	Verdi	Grand March

Music for clean-up	Brahms	Symphony No. 3
	Berlin	Any selection
	Dvorak	Cello Concert

From: [Accelerated Learning With Music: A /Trainer's Manual](#), Terry Wyler Webb with Douglas Webb

I was going to do a video of me humming all of these but I thought a list would be better.

LOL

One more tidbit---when you are ready to turn the music off, do not just turn the music off, slowly lower the volume until it is off.

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 8:12 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Sunday, September 25, 2011

Daily Assignment #78: Homework

So, have you given homework yet? Have you established a policy about homework? Is there a district or school mandate on homework?

This is such a controversial topic. Parents want more and more homework for their children. Teachers spend a lot of time preparing and then grading homework. Is it necessary? I have read so many articles which support the need for homework and then other articles which have said homework makes no difference in students' performances.

I would like to share with you my belief and practice in regard to homework. I believe, and please know that this is my belief based on 34 years of teaching experience and readings, that homework in the grades K-3 does not make a difference in a student's performance in the classroom. For students at these grade levels, I believe it is more important for them to read each night or to be read to. If you do decide to give homework at K-3 level, keep in mind that it should not take the child more than 10 minutes to do it. In grade 4, students should have no more than 15 minutes of math work and then 15-20 minutes of reading each night. In grades 5-6, students should have 50-60 minutes of homework. Harris M. Cooper, professor of education at Duke University and author of "The Battle Over Homework: Common Ground for Administrators, Teachers and Parents," says that 1 hour to 90 minutes of homework for middle school students and 2 hours for high school students can be associated with greater academic achievement.

Homework should be purposeful, not busy work. This is going to take time and effort from the teacher. Also, grading of the homework should have meaning and help the student to move forward in their learning. Again, this will take time and effort from the teacher. Students know when they have been given busy work and when it is not going to make a difference in their final grade.

I hope this has given you something to think about as you plan that next homework assignment or think through your homework policy.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 6:36 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

Daily Assignment #77: Open House Update

I would like to share with you some suggestions for designing Open House/Back to School Night.

- Consider sending student made invitations to parents.
- Plan your presentation and what you will be saying to parents beforehand. Be sure you share something about yourself (where you grew up, your education, your

family, your educational philosophy) as well as some of your goals for the year.
(Make it brief)

- Dress professionally. I can't stress this enough.
- Prepare your room. Hang a "Welcome" sign outside the door, and be sure your name and the room number are prominently displayed. Have a sign-in sheet for parents as well as a handout listing the activities and presentations for the evening. Freshen up your bulletin boards, and display a daily schedule. Set out sample textbooks, and be sure all desks and tables are clean. Be sure each child's desk has a folder with samples of the student's work. Post additional student work (be sure to have at least three samples for each student) on bulletin boards. Post photographs of students and activities throughout the room.
- Greet each parent at the door with a handshake and a smile. Be sure every parent has a name tag (remember that the last name of a student and the last name of her or his parents may be different).

<http://youtu.be/yYvYX2gowrU>

Possible topics to cover:

Elementary: daily schedule, homework, grading, classroom rules, units of study.

Middle/High School: discipline policy, homework, grading, field trips, extracurricular activities

Please share this link with colleagues and friends.

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 9:55 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Sunday, September 18, 2011

Daily Assignment #76: Number Scrolls

As promised, I would like to describe a math strategy called "scrolls". Scrolls are an amazing tool for grades 1-3. Having said that, if students begin a scroll in first or second grade, continuing to work on the scrolls in the upper grades should be considered for the reasons I describe in the video.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

<http://youtu.be/kkkpNIRLXpE>

Posted by **linda103** at 4:50 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Monday, September 5, 2011

Daily Assignment: Notice

Dear Friends,

I have not disappeared, just got lost in a time warp.

Access to the internet is very limited right now. Therefore, I won't be adding to this blog: Daily Assignment, until Sept. 16th. So please remember to check in then. Sorry about this. You can certainly go through previous blogs for strategies.

In the meantime, Best Effort and see you on the 16th.

Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 8:58 AM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Wednesday, August 31, 2011

Daily Assignment #75: Planning the 1st Day

The first few days are always a challenge to prepare for. I hope the suggestions in this video help with your planning.

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

<http://youtu.be/j5EowIFvElw>

Posted by **linda103** at 8:00 PM No comments:



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Sunday, August 28, 2011

Daily Assignment #74: Classroom Design

Setting up a classroom can be a daunting task. To begin you might want to draw a floor plan and use pieces of paper to represent the furniture, this will not only save your back but give you a starting point.

In this video I offer some ideas to consider as you begin your planning.

I hope you find this helpful.

Please share this blog with colleagues and friends.

If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

<http://youtu.be/28zbYMyPww0>

Posted by **linda103** at 8:38 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, August 24, 2011

Daily Assignment #73: 1st Communication with Parents and Students

Hello Everyone,

I am experimenting with new ways to present my blog. So, for the first time I am including a webcam video of myself. Hopefully, this works. Best Effort to me!!

Linda103

<http://www.youtube.com/user/dailyassignment#p/a/u/o/NdbaatzZPE>

Posted by **linda103** at 8:24 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, August 21, 2011

Daily Assignment #72: Begin Again

Hello Everyone,

Welcome back to another school year. I'm sure it feels like the summer zipped by.

I know that some of you have started thinking about the upcoming year and some of you are still in a vacation mode. So as not to overwhelm you, at this time with a new strategy, I am going to do a bit of a book promotion.

Here goes-----

To all teachers, seasoned and new, I have published a very helpful resource book: *Daily Assignment: 70 Effective Teaching Strategies At A Glance*. It's a great book to remind you of those strategies that you may have forgotten, or have never tried. The perfect book to keep on your desk as a reference for the effective strategy needed to clarify or improve instruction.

I hope you will take the opportunity to visit this site:

:<http://www.bookemon.com/book-profile/daily-assignment/126409>. I know you will find the book useful in the upcoming year. (It also makes a wonderful gift for the new or seasoned teacher that you know.)

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 7:46 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Sunday, June 19, 2011

Daily Assignment #71: Legacy

A dear friend, and colleague, (Jane), asked me what I wanted my legacy to teaching to be when I retired. I believe it is the hope of all teachers that something taught, or done through the years, impacts a student, or colleague, in away that the spirit of the lesson/experience carries on years after we have left the profession. However, for me, I couldn't figure out what that was.

After watching this video, by Sir Ken Robinson, I realized what I would like to be my legacy. I want people to say that, "Linda taught the total child." When I reflect on my 34 years of teaching, I recognize that I not only taught the core content areas, but I included ceramics, orienteering, recorders, ballroom dancing, dramatizations, plays, knitting, singing, art and things I can't even remember.

Please know, I did not do this alone, parents and volunteers supported my classroom on a regular basis. An amazing parent,(Barb), volunteered to teach orienteering for many years, as did a parent, (Lucia), who taught ceramics, and a group of mothers, who came in once a week, to teach knitting, to mention a few. So, you see, it does take a village.

I hope by watching this video you will become, if not already, more cognizant of

how you integrate music, art, physical movement, or whatever else you can do, to tap into a child's interest, strengths, and most importantly, the creative part of their brain.

This video is 19 minutes long. It is well worth your time. It is humorous, while making an important point. So, please take the time to watch.

```
<iframe width="425" height="349"
src="http://www.youtube.com/embed/iG9CE55wbtY" frameborder="0"
allowfullscreen></iframe>
```

On another note, this will be last blog until August 21st. Please make sure you rejoin this site at that time. I am planning to experiment with new ways to share strategies with you beginning in August. Having said that, as you start planning for next year, I hope you will use this site as a reference.

Now, go and have a wonderful, relaxing and well deserved summer vacation. Remember to use sunblock, laugh, do something kind each day and smile. You are an amazing person because you are a teacher and you do make a difference!!!

Please continue to share this link with colleagues and friends.
Become a "Follower" so you will know when the new blogs are added.
Thank you for your support AND
Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 7:20 PM No comments: 

Recommend this on Google

Labels: **Sir Ken Robinson**

Wednesday, June 15, 2011

Daily Assignment #70: 7 Qualities of Highly Effective Teachers

As the end of the school years nears, I would like to share with you some inspirational/motivational pieces I have found beginning with 7 Qualities of Highly Effective Teachers by Linc. Fisch.

1. **Highly effective teachers care.** They care about their students, their work, and themselves. They treat others with dignity; they respect others' integrity. They give high priority to benefiting others. They affirm others' strengths and beings; it's a kind of love.
2. **Highly effective teachers share.** They share their knowledge, insights, and viewpoints with others. Their willingness to share is a way of life for them. They don't withhold information for personal gain.
3. **Highly effective teachers learn.** They continually seek truth and meaning. They seek to discover new ideas and insights. They reflect on their experiences and incorporate the learning into their lives. They are willing to upgrade their skills. They continue growing and developing throughout their lives.
4. **Highly effective teachers create.** They are willing to try the new and untested, to take risks for worthy educational outcomes. Anything worth doing is worth failing at. They are not discouraged by an occasional failure; they reframe the error as an opportunity to do better as a result of the experience.
5. **Highly effective teachers believe.** They have faith in students. They trust students and are willing to grant them freedom and responsibility. They hold high expectations for their students, as well as for themselves.
6. **Highly effective teachers dream.** They have a vision of success. They are driven by an image of excellence, the best that their innate abilities allow. They always seek to improve, never being content with just "getting by" in teaching or in any other endeavor.
7. **Highly effective teachers enjoy.** Teaching is not just employment to them; it is their Work. They throw themselves into it with vigor. They gain major satisfaction and joy from it. And that joy often infects their students.

I hope this inspires you and reaffirms all the hard work that you do.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends.

If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 4:18 PM No comments:



[Recommend this on Google](#)

Sunday, June 12, 2011

Daily Assignment #69: Best Effort

Several Followers have emailed and have asked why I close with "Best Effort." I have learned, and believe, that everything we do is based on the effort we put into it. If we, and our students, want to learn and be successful we must put in our best effort. Best effort includes time, practice, focus, effective strategies, resourcefulness, using feedback, and determination.

When learning something new we must use effective effort to build capacity.

Example: Learning to ski, we must put incredible effort at the beginning and as we become better at skiing we put in less effort because we have built capacity. For our students, learning any piece of content requires a lot of effort at the beginning, e.g. learning to read, memorizing the multiplication tables, learning the Periodic Table, Pythagorean theory, etc...

I no longer say to students "Good Luck" on a test, project, presentation, sport, etc... I always say, "Best Effort". Luck means outside influences lead to success. Luck, good or bad, applies to the lottery, and we all know how that works. Luck does not apply to learning and has no place in the classroom. "Best Effort" means success will be the result of the effort put into the test, project, etc...

I hope you will think about the language you use with your students in reference to effort and success.

So,
Best Effort,
Linda103

P.S. Please share this link with colleagues and friends.

Posted by [linda103](#) at 6:58 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Wednesday, June 8, 2011

Daily Assignment #68: Closure for the End of the Year #3: Letters

This strategy is for the very beginning of community building for the new year and away for current students to "pass the wand" to the new students.

Each current student writes a letter to an incoming student for the next school year. The letter should include a sentence welcoming the new student to the class, one or two sentences about projects and activities that were done this year, and perhaps a sentence on their favorite thing in the classroom.

Students should use the formal letter writing format. Each letter should begin with "Dear...." and end with "Your Friend" or "Sincerely Yours".

Example:

Dear _____,

Welcome to room 103.

This is such an exciting class to be in. This year we studied islands and got to make volcanoes. We also studied Social Justice. We did a play based on the Montgomery Boycott. You probably don't know what that is yet, but you will.

My favorite thing in the classroom is the art area. We get to use clay, paints, markers and other neat stuff.

I hope you have as much fun as me in room 103.

Your friend,
Benjamin

You may not have a class list for next September and therefore you cannot identify to whom each letter is to be addressed to. So, just have the students write "Dear" and leave a blank, which you will fill in later.

Two weeks before school begins, send one of these letters and a welcoming letter from you to each of your new students. (refer to Daily Assignment #1) This, of course, will require you to find a save place for the letters over the summer and to remember where you put them.

Posted by [linda103](#) at 9:44 PM No comments: 

[Recommend this on Google](#)

Sunday, June 5, 2011

Daily Assignment #67: Closure for the End of the Year: #2 Goodbye Book

Another activity for the end of the year is a "Goodbye Book". This provides a brief summary of the school year for the students.

The teacher puts the name of the class and the year on the front cover. The students complete the cover by decorating it with drawings of things that happened throughout the year.

On the inside have 8-10 pages with ideas for drawings or words. For example:

Draw a picture of your teachers.

Draw a picture of a friend.

Something you learned.

Favorite field trip.

Something that made you laugh.

Favorite activity.

Favorite book.

Something I shared.

Something I'm good at.

Favorite project.

Favorite unit of study.

Autograph pages/ a gift from a friend. (The gift from the friend would be kind words.)

A gift from your teacher. (Again, this would be kind words.)

Match the ideas to your class and your students. I'm sure you have a lot more ideas.

On a side note, I spoke with a student today, who I had 15 years ago, she said she still has her book! So, these are definitely keepers.

I hope you will experiment with this activity.

Please share this link with colleagues and friends.

If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,

Linda103

Posted by linda103 at 8:12 PM No comments: [Recommend this on Google](#)

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

Daily Assignment #66: Closure for the End of the Year: #1 Portfolio Presentations

It is June 1st, which means you are almost at the end of this school year. YEA!!!! Now, is a good time to start planning for the last week of school, if you haven't already.

An activity I did with students, the last week of school, were Portfolio Presentations. I would meet with each student, (2-3 weeks before the end of school), and go through their work--math, writing, projects, drawings, journals, assessments. Students would select a piece of work from the beginning of the year and, in the same content area, a piece of work from the end of the year. We would conference on the significance of the selected work, e.g. why it was chosen, what it represents for the student, what is the difference between the 2 pieces of work, what did the student learn that makes the difference, can they demonstrate the learning. The students would write their responses, which are used for their oral presentation.

Example:

Math: the student selects a worksheet, from September, which demonstrates his capacity to do simple equations. The second worksheet, from May, represents the student's capacity to solve 3-digit subtraction equations with regrouping. For the presentation the student would read their responses from the questions and then demonstrate how to solve a 3-digit subtraction equation with regrouping.

Reading: the student selects a book they read in September and then a book they are currently reading. They respond to the questions. For the presentation the student would read the responses then read a passage from the first book and then from the latest book.

Writing: the student would select a piece from the beginning of the year and a current piece. For the presentation the student would read their responses then share their work. This can be done by copying the writing onto a transparency or by using an Elmo, or copying onto a computer and showing on a Smart board.

Art work: the student selects a piece of art from the beginning of the year, perhaps a drawing and a piece from the end of the year. For the presentation the student reads their responses, shares the art work and demonstrates/describes a technique that they have learned.

Music: the student selects a piece of music they learned at the beginning of the year and one they currently play/sing. For the presentation they read their responses, play the 1st piece, then the 2nd. To take this to the next level, the student could write their own piece of music to play/sing.

The presentations were done as part of a class breakfast. Parents/families, colleagues, administrators and anyone else who wanted to, came to this event. It was very powerful to hear and see the students share their learning. The students

took this event very seriously and really put in the effort into their presentations.

I hope you will consider this activity as you begin to plan for the end of the year.
Please share this link with colleagues and friends.
If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".
Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 10:27 PM No comments: 

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